

# MCCS/USNH Health & Wellness Corner

## JULY 2003

### **AIR TRAVEL HEALTH TIPS**

It's the time of year when many of us will be hitting the skies and putting in some serious air miles. Most people don't have any problems when they fly, but it's possible to make airplane travel safer and more comfortable. Here are some tips:

- ❑ Wear loose clothes when you fly. The air pressure makes our bodies swell up like the Michelin tire man.
- ❑ Drink plenty of water before, during, and after the plane trip. Bring your own water along to supplement what you get on the plane.
- ❑ The air in airplanes is extremely dry, so drink nonalcoholic, decaffeinated beverages to avoid becoming dehydrated.
- ❑ Eat well-balanced meals; however, avoid overeating.
- ❑ Exercise as much as possible on board. Contract/relax all the muscles in your body while seated. Get up and walk around as much as possible. Perform both upper and lower body stretches.
- ❑ Get used to a new time zone by going along with the local meal and bedtime schedules.
- ❑ Pack all of your medicines in your carry-on luggage. Take extra medicine in case your return trip is delayed.
- ❑ If your ears hurt when you fly, try taking a decongestant medicine before you get on the plane. You can also swallow often and chew gum during the flight.
- ❑ Even healthy people can get blood clots in their legs after long flights. Try to walk every now and then during the flight, drink enough water, and stretch your calf muscles while you're sitting.
- ❑ It's dangerous to fly immediately after scuba diving. You'll need to wait 12 to 24 hours after diving. Ask your doctor or local diving authorities for guidelines on flying after scuba diving.



### **DOG DAYS OF SUMMER**

The hot, humid Okinawa weather is here to stay. Anybody curious about the origins of the so-called "Dog Days of Summer?" According to the Columbia Encyclopedia, "DOG DAYS is the name for the most sultry period of summer, from about July 3 to August 11. Named in early times by observers in countries bordering the Mediterranean, the period was reckoned as extending from 20 days before to 20 days after the conjunction of Sirius (the Dog Star) and the sun. In the latitude of the Mediterranean region this period coincided with hot days that were plagued with disease and discomfort. The time of conjunction varies with difference in latitude, and because of the precession of the equinoxes it changes gradually over long periods in all latitudes. Now you know...

### **JULY HEALTH PROMOTION** **CALENDAR**

**Firecracker Run** - July 3, 2.5K for children starts at 2030, adult 5K starts at 2100. Start and finish at the Lester Gym. T-shirts, random prizes, medals for all kids, and post event party at the Corpsman's Cove. Cost is \$10, \$5 without T-shirt. There are only 80 shirts so register early! For more information, call the USNH Health Promotion at 645-2620.

**Tobacco Cessation** – Starting July 15, USNH Galley, 1700. Call the USNH Health Promotion at 645-2620.

**BALANCE** – Next meeting is July 17. Weight management support group. Meets monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Camp Lester Chapel. To sign up, call the USNH or MCCS Health Promotion.